get my wife into corners.

Ies. Nay, you neede not feare vs *Lorenzo*, *Launcelet* and I are out; he tels me flatly, there's no mercy for me in heauen, becauſe I am a Iewes daughter: and he ſayes you are no good member of the Common-wealth, for in conuerting Iewes to Chriſtians, you raiſe the price of Porke.

Lor. I ſhall anſwere that better to the Common-wealth than you can the getting vp of the Negros belly; the Moore's with childe by you *Lancelet*?

Clowne. It is much that the Moore ſhould be more then reaſon: but if ſhe be leſſe then an honeſt woman, ſhee is indeede more then I tooke her for.

Lor. How euery foole can play vpon the word, I thinke the beſt grace of wit will ſhortly turne into ſilence, and diſcourſe grow commendable in none onely but Parrats. Go in ſirra, bid them prepare for dinner?

Clow. That is done ſir, they haue all ſtomackes.

Lor. Goodly Lord what a wit-ſnapper are you: then bid the prepare dinner.

Clo. That's done too ſir, onely couer is the word.

Lor. Will you couer than ſir?

Clo. Not ſo ſir neither, I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occaſion, wilt thou ſhewe the whole wealth of thy witte in an inſtant? I pray thee vnderſtand a plaine man in his plaine meaning: Goe to thy Fellowes, bid them couer the table, ſerue in the meate, and we will come in to dinner.

Clo. For the table ſir, it ſhall be ſeru'd in, for the meate ſir it ſhall be couered, for your comming in to dinner ſir, why let it be as humors and conceits ſhall gouerne. *Exit Clowne.*

Lor. O deere diſcretion, how his words are ſuted,
The foole hath planted in his memory
An army of good words, and I do know
A many fooles that ſtand in better place,
Garniſh'd like him, that for a tricke ſie word
Defie the matter: how far'ſt thou *Ieſſica*?

And

And now good ſweet ſay thy opinion,
How doſt thou like the Lord *Baſſanios* wife?

Ies. Paſt all expreſſing, it is very meete
The Lord *Baſſanio* liue an vpright life,
For hauing ſuch a bleſſing in his Lady.
He findes the ioyes of heauen heere on earth,
And if on earth he doe not meane it, then
In reaſon he ſhould neuer come to heauen.
Why, if two Gods ſhould play ſome heauenly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And *Portia* one: there muſt be ſomething elſe
Pawn'd with the other; for the poore rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Euen ſuch a husband haſt thou of me,
As ſhe is for wife.

Ies. Nay, but aske my opinion too of that.

Lor. I will anon, firſt let vs go to dinner.

Ies. Nay, let me praiſe you while I haue a ſtomacke.

Lor. No prethee, let it ſerue for table talke,
Then howſoere thou ſpeakſt mong other things,
I ſhall diſgeſt it.

Ies. Well, ile ſet you forth. *Exit.*

Enter the Duke, the Magnificos, Anthonio, Baſſanio, and Gratiano.

Duke. What, is *Anthonio* heere?

An. Ready, ſo pleaſe your Grace.

Duke. I am ſorry for thee, thou art come to anſwer
A ſtony aduerſary, an inhumane wretch,
Vncapeable of pitty, voide and empty
From any dram of mercy.

An. I haue heard,
Your Grace hath tane great paines
To qualifie his rigorous courſe:
But ſince he ſtands obdurate,

And

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* (STC 22297) LONDON, 1600 [1619] THE BRITISH LIBRARY (C.12.g.31) Octavo